

August 21, 2006

The Honorable Michael Chertoff
Secretary
United States Department of Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20528

Dear Secretary Chertoff:

We write jointly to commend you for the expansion of Operation Stonegarden by increasing funding for training and other assistance for state and local authorities to support Border Patrol on targeted enforcement missions. We agree with Governor Napolitano in urging you to release this direly needed \$15 million appropriation to secure our nation's border.

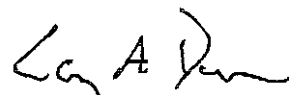
Although border security is a federal responsibility, the reality is that Arizona's 377-mile border remains porous. Increasing local law enforcement patrols can play an important support role in deterring illegal immigration and increasing security for Arizonans who live in these border communities.

As you know, previous phases of Operation Stonegarden in Arizona established an excellent working relationship and spirit of cooperation between the Border Patrol, the State, county and local law enforcement entities. Border county sheriffs work diligently with Border Patrol in the Tucson and Yuma Sector to deny the use of routes of egress and support the Border Patrol's primary mission of anti-terrorism, detection, arrest, prosecution and deterrence of all cross-border illicit activity.

In 2004 and 2005, Arizona appropriated \$822,000 for previous phases of Operation Stonegarden. In a four-month period, the increased law enforcement presence along the border resulted in 536 arrests (including 79 felony arrests), 31 recovered vehicles, 6,515 pounds of marijuana seized, \$16,000 in US currency seized, and 1,871 illegal immigrants turned over to CPB Border Patrol.

Our border is suffering from a bureaucratic morass by withholding the funding that Congress approved for state and local law enforcement through the Stonegarden program. On May 15, 2006 President Bush issued an emergency supplemental to the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Initiative providing the emergent resources to protect the international border. As of this day, we have not received this funding. We urge you to release these resources immediately and begin to live up to the Department of Homeland Security's priority of securing our nation's borders.

Respectfully,



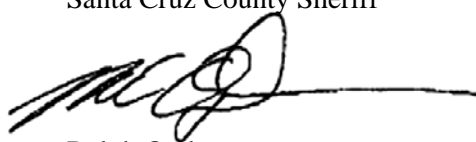
Larry Dever
Cochise County Sheriff



Clarence Dupnik
Pima County Sheriff



Tony Estrada
Santa Cruz County Sheriff



Ralph Ogden
Yuma County Sheriff

